

opportunity of acquiring knowledge, and of understanding his obligations as well to men as to God? We surely are—that “there are heads and hearts among us waiting for instruction, cultivation, and improvement,” none will deny—and that we possess abundant means without recourse to any sensible burthens upon the property of the State, cannot be questioned. Then why postpone an operation so replete with public good and private happiness—so essential, in very truth, to the actual permanency of our constitution, and the general prosperity of our population?

“*The young mind and heart, expanded, enlightened, and disciplined, in Primary Schools, will grow brighter and sounder by age. The impassable rampart to our liberties must be composed of intelligent heads and sound hearts. Our pa-noply, in peace or war, must be the heaving bosoms and vigorous arms of enlightened and virtuous freemen.*” Shall we not, then, afford to all, especially to the ignorant and destitute, the means sufficient to obtain the rudiments of education in common schools? That the labouring poor and handicraftsmen may be informed? *Is knowledge power?—Or does our power, or do our liberties depend upon the will of the people?* And shall we not instruct the people, that they may know the *value of freedom*, and thence become its best defenders? Or shall we *withhold the light of knowledge*, and from the effect of our cold neglect or culpability, leave them in mental degradation, the ready tools of some insidious conspiracy, or bold and baneful treachery? And might not the sufferance of such neglect, under present times and circumstances, be justly charged upon the wise and wealthy of our State, as a *great and crying sin*—a criminal omission not only against the immediate welfare of the poor and ignorant, but more affecting the *vital essence of our Constitution*. With respect to Schools, or the present state of our literature, although it cannot be said that we are absolutely “stagnating in ignorance and immorality,” yet, when compared with New England and New York, we are low indeed, and far behind.

The *apprehension of taxes*, or assessments upon the counties, anticipated to follow from the operation of the new system, is *without cause*, and it comes with an ill grace from distant or interior sections. *The entire support and pay of teachers being disbursed from the General Treasury, will bring amongst us a mass of money, and aid essentially our circulation. We shall receive dollars where we pay dimes.* Can it be necessary to repeat a fact so apparent and demonstrable? But, in any event, the *needful funds* will be